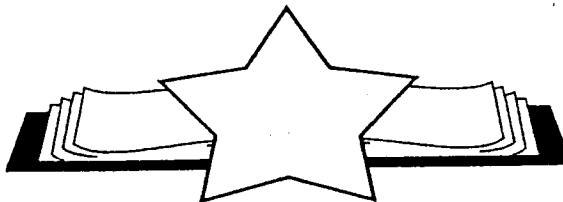


NEW JERSEY

2001-2002

Guidelines and Application


STAR



SCHOOLS

Deadline for Application to County Office:
DECEMBER 14, 2001

The Star School application is a public document. The information that you provide will serve as the official record. Review the application prior to submission to ensure accuracy and adherence to the guidelines. Type or keyboard information requested on this page

County	Gloucester		
District (Proper Name)	Woodbury		
Address	Street P. O. Box	25 N. Broad St.	
	City	Woodbury, NJ	Zip Code 08096
Telephone	Fax	Email	
856-853-0123	856-853-0304	jwilson@woodburysch.com	
Chief School Administrator	Judith Wilson		
Nominated School (Proper Name)	Evergreen Avenue School		
Address	Street/P. O. Box	160 N. Evergreen Avenue	
	City	Woodbury, NJ	08096 Zip Code
Telephone	Fax	Email	
856-853-0125	856-853-2867	fcarey@woodburysch.com	
Principal	Frances G. Carey		
Chief School Administrator's or Charter School Lead Person's Signature			

FOR USE BY COUNTY SUPERINTENDENT OF SCHOOLS ONLY

Approved: ☒ Yes ☐ No County Superintendent's Signature 

**NEW JERSEY
STAR SCHOOLS
2001-2002 APPLICATION**

RESPONSES to the information below and the statements must be **ANONYMOUS**. No reference should be made to the names of the district, the school or the community. Use the words "the school" in referring to the applicant in the responses to the statements.

The following data is required to assist the panelists in the evaluation of the application:		
Type of School <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Elementary School <input type="checkbox"/> Middle School <input type="checkbox"/> Junior High School <input type="checkbox"/> High School <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____	Grade Levels <div style="text-align: center; font-size: 1.5em; font-weight: bold;">1-4</div> <input type="checkbox"/> _____ <input type="checkbox"/> _____ <input type="checkbox"/> _____	School Enrollment _____ Name of the School's Specialization _____ _____ _____
Location: _____ Urban/city; _____ Suburban with urban characteristics; _____ Suburban; _____ Small City/Town; _____ Rural		
Previous Star School: Yes ___ No ___ If Yes, Year(s) _____		

KEYBOARDED RESPONSES to the statements below must be no more than a total of five pages. Keyboard the statement followed by the response.

1. Describe the school's specialization and its objectives, the student educational needs and the specific *Core Curriculum Content Standards*, including the *Cross-Content Workplace Readiness Standards*,* that it addresses. Detail how it promotes high student achievement and contributes to school-wide accomplishments.
2. Describe the professional development activities and research of the school's faculty. Detail to what extent these activities contribute to exemplary teaching practices in their classrooms. Explain the link between these activities and the specialization.
3. Describe the leadership style of the school's administration and how the management and educational program demonstrate administrative and fiscal efficiency. Describe any innovative scheduling and/or management strategies implemented.
4. Describe the school's overall approach to assessment. How are your methods aligned to the specialization? How are you ensuring that the content you are measuring is consistent with the *Core Curriculum Content Standards*? Provide student performance data for at least the 1999-2000 and 2000-2001 school years. Use state tests and, if available, national and/or district standardized norm-referenced tests, criterion-referenced tests, and/or alternative assessments. Explain any dramatic increase or decrease. Specify which groups, if any, are excluded from the assessments for which you provide data. Give the percentage of students excluded. You may use a chart.
5. Describe collaborative efforts with families, business, the community, school districts, and/or higher education that contribute to a school environment governed by the students' needs and promoting high student achievement.
6. **Previous Star School Winners Only:** Provide a one-page addendum to your application that describes efforts to expand or replicate the specialization within the school and/or the district. Have there been dissemination activities beyond the school or district? If so, please elaborate.

*The May 1996 edition of the *Core Curriculum Content Standards* published by the New Jersey State Department of Education was disseminated to all districts and charter schools and is available on line through the department's website at <http://www.state.nj.us/education>.
6appss.01-02b

1. **Describe the School's specialization and its objectives, the student educational needs and the specific Core Curriculum Content Standards, including Cross-Content Workplace Readiness Standards, that it addresses. Detail how it promotes high student achievement and contributes to school-wide accomplishments.**

Our three areas of specialization include the following: Multi-age and looping classes, Chinese Language in the elementary school in Grades Kindergarten – 4 and a brain-based research professional development program.

In multi-age and looping classes, students remain with the same teacher or team of teachers. Continuity of instruction is extremely important with our population. Our mobility rate is high at 43%. Our socio-economic status is 64% poverty. Thematic units are taught over the course of two years and instruction is more easily geared to a variety of academic levels and learning styles. Interventions and accommodations are better implemented to promote student growth.

Our target population is Grades 1 through 4. Classrooms more readily develop a "community of learners" mentality. Relationships between teacher and student are stronger, and trust development between teacher and parent is more apparent. The more there is a connection between parties, the greater the opportunity to further student growth. The multi-age classes incorporate all the content standards, in addition to the three Cross Content Workplace Readiness Standards listed below since all classes are Internet connected and use a thematic approach to instruction.

Standard 2: All students will use information, technology, and other tools.

Standard 3: All students will use critical thinking, decision making and problem-solving skills.

Standard 4: All students will demonstrate self-management skills.

Our second area of specialization is the teaching of Mandarin Chinese in Grades Kindergarten – 4, and an after-school Chinese club for fifth graders. The research on foreign language instruction is clear. Neurologically, the child's mind is more facile than the adult's. Our Mandarin study enhances mental flexibility, creativity, divergent thinking and higher order thinking skills. Starting Chinese early also contributes to a multi-cultural awareness necessary for living in a pluralistic world. Students receive forty minutes of instruction every third day. The Chinese culture and fluency in Mandarin Chinese are taught. The main goal of the Mandarin Chinese program is to enrich the educational experience and to provide children with learning opportunities to become proficient in a foreign language as defined by the New Jersey Core Curriculum Content Standards: 7.1 and 7.2.

The objectives of the program include:

- ◆ To enable students to communicate at the basic proficiency level on selected topics related to their daily life.

- ◆ To infuse a love for language learning and a sense of accomplishment through using the language in meaningful and age-appropriate activities.
- ◆ To enhance students' cross-cultural understanding and respect for different cultures such as the Chinese culture.

The Chinese programs at our school directly addresses the New Jersey Core Content Curriculum Standards listed as follows:

- 7.1 All students will be able to communicate at a basic literacy level, orally and in writing, in at least one language other than English.
- 7.2 All students will be able to demonstrate an understanding of the interrelationship between language and culture for at least one world language in addition to English.

The New Jersey Cross-Content Workplace Readiness Standard emphasis that "All Students will develop career planning and workplace readiness skills, i.e. students will be expected to develop skills to seek, obtain, maintain and change jobs."

Following Ernest Boyer's saying: "We study western civilization to know our past, but need to study non-western civilization to know our future," we firmly believe that it is our obligation to look to the future when we plan for young children. The world is rapidly changing and technological advances continue to cause it to shrink. One of every five people now speaks Mandarin Chinese, making Chinese the most commonly spoken language in the world. China, is an emerging power. Its prospects for economic growth are impressive because of the size of the market (1.2 billion) and its growth rate (9% annually for the last 15 years). If our children are to successfully compete in the business arena, they must understand the culture of their competitors. One of the best ways to understand a foreign culture is the study of its language. Our children will be better prepared for taking their place in an international market with the study of the Chinese Language.

Assessment of the learning results consists primarily of oral tests between the teacher and individual students. Written tests at our level consist of the checklists wherein the student correctly identifies a picture of an object announced in Chinese. Most of our assessment is performance based; the singing of a song, the acting of a skit, etc. within the daily classroom setting. Our annual Chinese New Year Celebration Show is the epitome of performance assessment and the most attended event in the school.

Our third specialization is a school-wide professional development program on brain-based learning. This is unique to our school. We have achieved funding through grants; the program is called "Schools Attuned to Neurodevelopmental Variations".

Our target population is pre-k through grade 5 teachers. As a group, we come together monthly at "Grand Rounds" where student data is shared. Data has been gathered through the use of specifically designed instruments called, Views, where behavior viewed through a variety of observational windows has been recorded. We present the

child's strengths, weaknesses and passions. We search for patterns and, together, develop a management plan. Schools Attuned is more precise, specific and less stigmatizing than child study team referrals and classifications. As a result of using Schools Attuned our teachers learn to develop effective accommodations and interventions to student learning problems, thus increasing the child's chance of success.

Our goal is to do away with the "one-size fits all mentality" and provide modifications and interventions to break down leaning barriers. With 30 trillion brain cells, why shouldn't we expect some difference in developmental functioning? But we do need to know how to deal with these differences. Since we are in the business of growth, we have been excited by the possibility of expanding our repertoire of skills. "If you only have a hammer, you tend to treat everything as a nail." Our staff is more than willing to learn new ways to address the academic diversity in our classrooms. We are committed to expanding our repertoire for the sake of all our children.

- 2. Describe the professional development activities and research of the school's faculty. Detail to what extent these activities contribute to exemplary teaching practices in their classrooms. Explain the link between these activities and the specialization.**

The professional development opportunities of our district have been concentrated on the development of thematic instructional units, the integration of technology into classroom instruction, Penn Literacy, professional classroom collaboration and assessment. Our school is unique because in addition to the district staff development efforts, we are studying brain-based research on how children learn. These staff development efforts all dovetail, supporting the teachers in their exemplary teaching practices, which connect learning with the world of the child. Our teachers can be observed "chunking" and summarizing content, using graphic-organizers, implementing journal writing, spelling journals, word banks, pre-writing strategies, checklists, study buddies, peer conferencing and study guides. They utilize students strengths and affinities, incorporating multi-disciplinary and thematic units and multi-sensory activities. These efforts emphasize communication, content, pedagogy, relationship building, accessing information and making meaning from what we learn. Teaching children to reflect on how they learn is integral to the brain-based research study.

- 3. Describe the leadership style of the school's administration and how the management and educational program demonstrate administrative and fiscal efficiency. Describe any innovative scheduling and/or management strategies implemented.**

The expression "The Joy is in the journey" is applicable in response to this question. District support, coupled with grant funding, has allowed me to empower others.

The restructuring effort of looping, multi-age classes and in-class support has created a team approach to instruction. Teachers take greater risks because they are not operating in isolation and more thoroughly differentiate instruction, capitalizing on the strengths of

their team members. These changes are startling within a three year period, and very demanding; but intensive district staff development has created an environment where many are experts. I am humbly reminded of Sergiovanni. Though the principal is the "instructional leader", when one properly empowers others, the principal becomes the "head follower".

The Schools Attuned protocol demands we are silent when initially observing student work. After the review, we collaborate to provide modifications, but the presenting teacher becomes the expert, others are contributors. At a recent meeting, teachers were asked, "How has Schools Attuned changed you?" "We now start with the positives; we look specifically at student behaviors and no longer ask how children 'got that way', but concentrate on what to do." Our collaborative faculty meetings reflect this common purpose. Together we work toward growth - our own and that of our students. When I think of our school, I think of hope. I think, too, of the words of Sitting Bull, a Lakota Sioux, when he said, "Let us put our minds together and see what life we can make for our children." With every decision that is made we ask the question, "How does this move children forward?" That is why in the past four years we have implemented a preschool program, full day kindergarten, a full computer lab as well as three Internet connected computers in each classroom. We have restructured the school and implemented in-class support teams and looping and multi-age classes to better meet the needs of students who come from transient homes. Through grants, we have implemented the study of Chinese language grades k - 4 and the study of brain-based research on how children learn. Of special note is the fact that without increasing costs, but through restructuring, the basic skills programs has transitioned from a forty minute pullout program to a two and a half hour in-class support model. The professional development work in collaborative partnerships has facilitated the effectiveness of the basic skills program.

4. **Describe the school's overall approach to assessment. How are your methods aligned to the specialization? How are you ensuring that the content you are measuring is consistent with the Core Curriculum Content Standards? Provide student performance data for at least the 1999-2000 and 2000-2001 school years. Use state tests and, if available, national and/or district standardized norm-referenced tests, criterion-referenced tests, and/or alternative assessments. Explain any dramatic increase or decrease. Specify which groups, if any, are excluded from the assessments for which you provide data. Give the percentage of students excluded. You may use a chart.**

Along with traditional assessments, we have implemented alternative forms of assessment such as performance assessment, rubrics, literacy and math logs. Our teachers write the curriculum, and part of their responsibility is aligning each curricular piece with a specific standard. Listed below are our ESPA scores for regular education students who scored at the proficient level for the last three years. No students were excluded.

	<u>Language</u>	<u>Math</u>	<u>Science</u>
98-99	32.3	32.3	61.3
99-00	37.0	44.4	70.4
00-01	61.5	48.7	61.5

We still lack the required proficiency, but we take pride that we are moving forward along the continuum of success. What is of note is that among the schools in our district, we have moved from last place to the middle position in mathematics, and from last place to first in literacy. We have always ranked highest in science.

5. Describe the collaborative efforts with families, business, the community, school districts, and/or higher education that contribute to a school environment governed by the students' needs and promoting high student achievement.

Children need role models to become lifetime learners. Through our Strategic Planning Meetings, I have developed relationships with First Union and Commerce Bank whose employees have read stories to our children and provided economic lessons respectively. The Rotary Club has funded our summertime "China Camp" and has supported our Mandarin Chinese teacher's project of making language tapes. Fourth grade Mandarin students will tape conversational phrases and sell their recordings to younger students at a minimal fee. This project, like our school store, allows children to be responsible for specific skills, including fulfilling orders, handling money and delivering goods. Every student becomes "Student of the Day" before the year's end. This program affirms that each child is a valuable contributor to the school. Students distribute the Principal's daily staff memo, raise the flag and fold it, according to tradition. When a student violates a school rule, not only are consequences put in place but "restitution" becomes an integral part of the healing process. Teaching responsibility and commitment is our goal. Monthly, we hold character education assemblies, in a style similar to a Quaker Meeting; teachers stand, acknowledge a child's good deed, and physically place a leaf bearing the child's name on our "Good Deed Tree". Our meetings are brief but effective, and children look forward to being acknowledged. Of course, classroom parent invitations are frequent and grants have fostered "Parent Star Nights". Parents and students together study the stars. Volunteer tutors assist with reading and math. Students visit the local nursing homes to assist there. We have partnered with the University of Pennsylvania and Rowan University with Penn Literacy and The Collaborative Classroom Professional Development Program, respectively. Additionally, our community contributors include "911 Safety" through State Farm Insurance Company, Veteran's Day assemblies with the American Legion, Fire Safety with the Fire Department and Finger Printing Activities with the Police Department. These efforts impact on a child's sense of safety and self. Being a productive and active contributor create a feeling of success...and that success builds more success and greater achievement.